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BOOK REVIEWS

English Literature and the Classics. Collected by G. S. GORDON.

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912. Pp. 252. 6s.

These attractive lectures, though delivered at Oxford in the winter of 1911-12, are of the university extension or summer-school type and appeal to the educated public rather than to the philological specialist. Like most collections of this kind, the book does not quite redeem the promise of its ambitious title. Less than half of the contributors attempt any serious consecutive study of the influence of their author on modern literature. One of the best of the essays in this regard, as well as the longest, is the editor's paper on "Theophrastus and His Imitators." Mr. Gordon, after a sufficient account of the *Characters* of Theophrastus, shows how a similar literary form was developed in England, first out of the mediaeval rhetorical exercise known as the *descriptio*, and later under the influence of the Latin version and commentary of Casaubon. He then traces the history of "characters" and comedy humors in English literature down to the time when the work of LaBruyère prepared the way for that of Addison, who, not always successfully, fused the "character" and the essay. This plain substantial fare is spiced with some rather phantastical speculation on the dependence of this entire literary tradition on Aristotle's doctrine of the mean and the revolt of the renaissance and superman nature against this "burgess notion." The twentieth-century Englishman, inspired by Wilde and Shaw, is highly resolved that at any cost of rhetoric he will not be commonplace, rational, "burgess," or virtuous. "Pericles," says Mr. Gordon ironically, "had hit the perfect note, 'Beauty without expense,' and the moderate man cheered a compromise. But Beauty at any cost is the Renaissance ideal." Mr. Gordon thinks that "Alcibiades and his friends would have understood this." The superman not only scorns Mill and Jebb and Tennyson but must have his fling at Pericles, Sophocles, and Pindar.

Professor Phillimore gives, largely after Rohde, a sketch of the origins and extant remains of the Greek romances, emphasizing, as was to be expected, the rôle of Philostratus. He refers in a postscript to Dr. Wolff's learned volume which "displays how much that thesis-writers will not willingly let die in English literature was derived from the Greek novelists." With all the superiorities which it derives from a more thorough secondary training and with all its brilliant virtuosity English scholarship would nevertheless be the better for a little more of this despised German-American thesis-writing.

Mr. A. C. Clark's "Ciceronianism" is in the main a readable résumé of Zielinski's *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, twice reviewed in this Journal.

Professor Stewart renovates the well-worn theme of Platonism in English poetry by practically ignoring Spenser, the "Intimations of Immortality," and "Epipsychidion," and taking Wordsworth's "Prelude" as the only true gospel. His eloquent study is based on his personal definition of "personal Platonism" and therefore owes no account of itself to a purely historical and matter-of-fact criticism.

"The only Latin poet who can be supposed to have influenced the spirit of mediaeval literature is Ovid," wrote Lowell long ago. Mr. S. G. Owen, like Lowell whom he does not quote, celebrates the quality in Ovid which he calls imagination, and which Wordsworth and Coleridge would perhaps rather have designated as fancy. Mr. Owen is apparently not acquainted with Professor Rand's paper on Ovid in the Harvard volume, and Professor Schevill's recent study of Ovid and the Spanish Renaissance in the *University of California Publications in Modern Philology* came, of course, too late for his use. He gives us mainly a somewhat detailed account of the debt to Ovid of Chaucer, Gower, and (after Sidney Lee and Max Dürnhöfer) of Shakespeare.

Mr. Garrod, conscious of his Matthew Arnold, writes beautifully about the wistful pathos with which the conflict of the Celt and the Roman in Virgil invests the self-contradictions of that glorious failure, the *Aeneid*. I do not know whether this is true. But the spell of Virgil is real, and Mr. Garrod helps us to feel it. Mr. R. J. E. Tiddy writes on "Satira and Satire" from the standpoint of the discriminating literary critic, not from that of the conjectural philologist. He ignores altogether the recent American and German literature of the subject and takes for granted the distinction between the old *per saturam* medley of Ennius and Varro and the sharp denunciatory tongue-lashing manner which Lucilius took over from the old Greek comedy. He is mainly interested, however, in tracing through English literature the contrast between the two types of ethical and castigatory satire, and exhibiting the debt of both to the great Latin satirists, and the community of spirit between the older English ethical satire and the early literature of Rome.

Mr. Godley's essay is mainly an excellent characterization of the rhetoric, epigram, stichomythia, point-making, and pedantic erudition of Senecan tragedy. In the two or three pages devoted to the history of its influence he does not mention the considerable modern literature of the subject. His concluding statement that the Senecan style influenced French tragedy more than English needs more qualification than he gives to it. "Rhetorical purple patches," he says, "and rhetorical rotundity of phrasing appeal to France as they never could to England." No educated Frenchman would concede this. French tragedy imitated the structure of Senecan tragedy and the rhetorical evolution of the long speeches. The English drama took the purple patches and sometimes transmuted them into brave translunary things.

The recent fashion of romantic and sentimental anthropology seems to have made a complete conquest of Professor Murray, and while the mood is on him he can see in Greek literature nothing but origins and survivals. In his epoptic moments he views the art of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in an apocalyptic vision or prehistoric "Walpurgisnacht Traum" of "Dromena," "Vegetation-Heroes," "Sexual taboos," "Daimones of divers sorts," "thirsty tribesmen," and communal dancers with "rhythmical yearning of the whole body towards the emotion that we cannot define."

Professor Murray, of course, can reverse the spell at pleasure and quote the *ῥᾶφε καὶ μέμνασ' ἀπιστεῖν* which ought to be, but too rarely is, the philologist's motto. But what of his audiences and his disciples, the "members of the English school"? When Clytemnestra calls Iphigenia *ἐμὸν . . . ἔπρος* will they think it "worth remembering too that primitive men draw no very clear line of demarkation between themselves and . . . vegetables"? Will they carry away the impression that it was the audiences of Sophocles that knew what it was to "wait wondering, full of the sense of horrible and unpardoned sin, despairing or performing ghastly rites, waiting till famine finished them off"? Will they innocently believe that uncontroverted Greek texts bear out the statement that in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* the chorus of the Danaids "imitate the way" the "divine cow, their ancestress," "cropped flowers in a meadow," that Sophocles makes Electra "behave like a wild beast and be disgusted with herself for so doing," and that the first chorus of the *Oedipus Rex* "represents a magic dance, full of hoots and shouts for driving away pestilence"? Can they afford to purchase thrills at the price of a logic which finds the suppliant motif in what is probably a skeptical Euripidean gibe? Is the new art of interpretation to proceed wholly by emotional and not at all by intellectually relevant association of ideas? "Tragedy," writes Professor Murray, "is full of the religion of the Suppliant, the man or woman who is stricken down by the world and has no help left but prayer." Prayer to whom, we ask, to Theseus or Demophoon? How closely for an Athenian consciousness was the motif of the patriotic plays that bear the title *Suppliants* associated with "the suffering and dying God"? "Tragedy," Professor Murray adds, "is haunted by this atmosphere, *for* [*italics mine*] to cry bitterly that the sun will *not* turn back in heaven

For the wrongs of man, the cry
Of his ailing tribes assembled,
To do justice ere they die,

is, as far as atmosphere goes, much the same thing as to assert that he will."

It would be pedantry to scrutinize minutely the compensatory licenses of a beautiful poetic translation intended for the general reader. But when Professor Murray argues as a scholar from the words of his own rendering, it becomes pertinent to point out that there are no ailing tribes assembled in the Euripidean text, there is no question of doing justice ere they die, there

is no hint of the despairing suppliant motif, and the passage as a whole is rather an anticipation of Epicurus or Voltaire than either a survival of primitive religious feeling or a Tennysonian wail for vanished faith.

But it all makes delightful reading and Professor Murray probably knows more about the compromises of his philological conscience with his poetical sentiment than any reviewer can tell him.

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Demosthenes' On the Crown. Edited with Introduction and Notes by MILTON W. HUMPHREYS. New York: American Book Co., 1913.

I have gone through the whole oration consecutively, following the notes as I read, comparing constantly with Goodwin's *editio minor*. The general result has been increased respect for both editions and both editors. We have in either case an excellent edition and a safe guide for the student's understanding and appreciation of Demosthenes' great masterpiece. Dr. Humphreys' notes are generally in substantial agreement with the interpretation of the earlier edition, but this only shows that Professor Goodwin is generally correct in his views. Humphreys' notes are independent, and there is no trace of borrowing. On the whole his notes are fuller than Goodwin's, as shown by the fact that his text and exegetical notes cover 259 pages, Goodwin's 199 pages, of about the same size. Humphreys quotes more illustrative examples, and in connection with this it is well to bear in mind what he says in his preface: "The examples, even those that are found in other editions, were for the most part collected by the editor." The collection grew with the study of many years, as may be inferred from another remark in the preface, that he "has annually taught Demosthenes' *On the Crown* for more than a third of a century."

As a specimen of one of Humphreys' fuller notes, we may take § 19, κατὰ πάντων ἐφύετο. Goodwin renders, "he was growing above all their heads, i.e., so as to threaten them all." Humphreys (critical note) says: "All the interpretations ascribe to φύομαι a meaning which it does not have. When a thing grows, it must of course get larger, but φύεσθαι, grow, does not mean become larger (αὐξάνεσθαι), but to grow as a plant, for instance, sprouts or grows. The MSS show no variations, and emendation is excluded. Could the expression mean πάντων (neut.) καταπτόμενος προσεφύετο, πᾶσι προσεφύετο καταπτόμενος, he was growing on to everything, i.e., he was getting his clutches into everything?" This is not convincing, and the London Athenaeum reviewer seems right in defending the ordinary interpretation.

In § 24: τί γὰρ καὶ βουλόμενοι μετεπέμπεσθ' ἄν, Goodwin simply translates: "With what possible object [καί] would you have been sending?" Humphreys' note is: "τί γὰρ καὶ βουλόμενοι, 'With what conceivable pur-